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Economic and environmental questions

Social and human rights questions

Consolidated report on the work of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council in 2005

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is aimed at assisting the Economic and Social Council in providing policy guidance to its functional commissions and in harmonizing their work. It gives an overview of the issues addressed by the commissions and highlights their contribution towards the implementation of a comprehensive framework for development originating from the Millennium Declaration and the goals embodied in the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits. In that regard, it contains a number of recommendations for consideration by the Council. On an exceptional basis, this year's report covers the work of the functional commissions since the Millennium Summit so as to provide a more dynamic and representative picture of the issues addressed by them.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2004/63 as well as earlier resolutions of the General Assembly and the Council.[1] The Council requested in that resolution that the Secretary-General submit to the general segment a consolidated report on the work of the functional commissions in 2005 focusing on the substantive aspects of their activities, so as to complement the report on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B. The General Assembly in its resolution 57/270 B emphasized the need to make better use of this report and dedicate more time for its review.

2. On an exceptional basis, this year's report covers the work of the functional commissions since the Millennium Summit so as to provide a more dynamic and representative picture of the issues addressed by the commissions. It highlights the work of the commissions and their key role in the development and implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration. The report is aimed at not only informing the Council but also contributing to its efforts to ensure that development issues figure effectively in the outcome of the September Summit.

3. Like the previous consolidated reports, the present report is, of necessity, of a selective nature, focusing on a limited number of activities chosen with a view to facilitate the Council's coordinating and guiding role on major common themes. The report should be read in conjunction with the reports of the functional commissions, as well as with the report of the Secretary-General to the high-level and coordination segments of the Council (E/2005/56) and the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B (E/2005/61).

4. The report provides an overview of the work of the functional commissions, identifying the main focus of their work programmes, priority topics and main outcomes, as well as major system-wide events and thematic linkages and complementarities among their activities.

II. Contributions of the functional commissions towards the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration

5. In the past, the consolidated report analysed selected themes considered by the functional commissions during the previous session. Building on those analyses, this year's report covers the period from 2001 to 2005. For reporting purposes, the analysis is organized in individual sections largely using the common themes that have emanated from the Millennium Declaration and the goals embodied in the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits as a guide to help to identify cross-cutting policy issues. That provides a way for the Council to deal with the outcomes of its functional commissions systematically.

6. The report covers the work of all nine commissions of the Council. The related work of the United Nations Forum on Forests and United Nations Forum on

Indigenous Issues is also included. The principal thematic focus of the work of individual functional commissions is presented in a conference room paper,[2] together with selected major events, such as the thematic special sessions of the General Assembly, to illustrate the linkages between the work programme of the commissions and those major United Nations meetings.

7. As requested by the Council, several functional commissions have developed multi-year programmes of work, selecting specific themes and addressing them from an integrated perspective. While the growing use of such programmes by individual functional commissions is facilitating collaboration and coherence among them, **the Council could consider ways to bring more predictability and certainty to its own programme of work**. That would enable the functional commissions to better prepare their contributions to the work of the Council from their own perspectives. They could also draw from the Council's work on common themes in their own debates.

8. It is envisaged that the high-level segment may endorse the common themes that have originated from the major United Nations conferences and summits to serve as a basis for the integrated implementation of the conference outcomes. Such common themes could also serve to orient the Council's contribution and its interaction with its functional commissions and be a source for the identification of themes for their multi-year work programmes, and, to the extent possible, introduce some thematic unity across them. **To facilitate early preparations, the Council could consider the following options: (a) embrace the common themes as a basis for its coordination segment work programme leading to 2015; (b) complete the work on its four-year multi-year work programme of its coordination segment on the basis of the common themes; or (c) select an indicative list of common themes from which the Council could choose its coordination segment theme on an annual basis.** Any of those options would help the Council and its commissions to introduce some thematic unity into their work programmes and enable them periodically to undertake more comprehensive reviews of the implementation of specific conferences or of progress around a common theme.

Recommendations

9. **The Council has received a broad range of policy inputs from its commissions as a contribution to its substantive session in 2005. It should invite the commissions to continue to provide concise, action-oriented input to its substantive session in 2006.**

10. **The Council is likely to focus on monitoring the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration. In that context, in addition to their own work programmes, the functional commissions could be encouraged to provide inputs in a systematic way to the Council's assessment of progress towards agreed development goals.**

11. **With regard to the Council's oversight and management function, the outcomes of the functional commissions should continue to be considered on the basis of a consolidated report. The Council may wish to give guidance on whether the report should follow a thematic approach focusing on one to two specific common themes each year.**

12. **The Council may wish to explore further avenues to promote greater harmony and thematic unity, including through the conclusion of a multi-year programme and/or an indicative list of common themes.**

A. Eradicating poverty, hunger and malnutrition

13. Since the Millennium Summit, eradication of poverty and hunger has taken on new urgency in the work of the functional commissions in the light of the quantitative targets of the Millennium Declaration to halve, by 2015, the proportion of the world's people living in extreme poverty and hunger. While that cross-cutting priority theme was addressed by most of the commissions over the past five years, the outcomes of particularly the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights provided the Council with a broad range of policy inputs.

14. The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Summit for Social Development emphasized eradication of poverty as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative. The eradication of poverty was also the first priority theme addressed by the Commission after the Social Summit, in 1996. In 2000, at the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, Member States called for putting poverty eradication at the centre of economic and social development and reducing by half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015. That Commitment was further embodied in the Millennium Declaration. The declaration that was adopted in 2005 at the forty-third session of the Commission for Social Development urged that the people-centred approach to development envisioned in the Copenhagen Declaration be restored and called for policies to link the efforts of poverty eradication to the fostering of social integration and to the promotion of employment strategies. Of particular importance was the call for the issues of employment and social integration to be injected into the Millennium Development Goals in order to broaden the concept of poverty eradication. The Commission requested that its Declaration be transmitted to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, through the Council, as a contribution to the review of the Millennium Declaration.

15. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its forty-sixth session, in 2002, identified gender equality and the empowerment of women as critical factors in the eradication of poverty. It requested relevant stakeholders to ensure that all actions to achieve the poverty eradication goals established in the Millennium Declaration include the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle.

16. The Commission on Human Rights annually addressed the human rights dimension of poverty, including as they relate to extreme poverty, the right to food, and the enjoyment of the whole range of human rights in general. In several of those areas, it appointed Special Rapporteurs and independent experts to provide input to its discussions on those issues.

17. The Commission on Population and Development, the Commission on Sustainable Development, the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice addressed eradication of poverty and hunger as an integral part of their deliberations. For example, the

Commission on Population and Development helped to advance international understanding of emerging population trends and their implications for eradication of poverty. The relationship between population, HIV/AIDS and poverty was addressed by the Commission at its thirty-eighth session. The relationship between poverty and sustainable development was addressed by the Commission on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Forum on Forests. This year, the Commission on Sustainable Development adopted a policy decision on practical measures to expedite progress in meeting the Millennium Development Goals and targets, as well as the Johannesburg commitments relating to water, sanitation and human settlements and requested it to be submitted through the Economic and Social Council as a contribution to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

18. Reviewing the outcomes of the functional commissions, linkages and complementarities can be seen in the different approaches of individual commissions to their dealing with eradication of poverty and hunger. Those outcomes will contribute to the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council and help in shaping its ministerial declaration. **A related issue is to ensure that the outcomes of the commissions have an impact on the Millennium Declaration review in September 2005 given that the General Assembly will be receiving many contributions from different forums.**

B. Advancing education and literacy

19. Advancement of education and literacy was another policy focus in the work of the commissions during the reporting period. Beginning with the World Conference on Education for All in 1990, the World Education Forum and the Millennium Summit in 2000, the international community has explicitly recognized that education, especially primary schooling, is critical for achieving social and demographic progress, sustained economic development and gender equality. The Economic and Social Council Ministerial Declaration of 2002 reaffirmed the commitment to mobilize political will and resources for the Education for All initiative.

20. The Commission on Human Rights called for a range of measures to give effect to the right to education. At its sixtieth session, in 2004, the Commission, for the first time, linked the realization of the right to education with the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. At its sixty-first session, in 2005, the Commission gave detailed guidance to its Special Rapporteur on the right to education, and encouraged collaboration between the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to strengthen monitoring and promoting it.

21. This year, in its 10-year review of Copenhagen, the Commission on Social Development reaffirmed the importance of promoting and attaining the goals of universal and equitable access to quality education as part of the effort to eradicate poverty, promote full and productive employment and foster social integration. In its 10-year review of Beijing, the Commission on the Status of Women emphasized that educating poor women as well as men can reduce poverty, and called upon women's equal participation in education at all levels.

22. At its thirty-sixth session, in 2003, the Commission on Population and Development addressed "Population, education and development" as its priority theme. It reaffirmed the right to education and the importance of improving educational quality and opportunities, especially for girls, and emphasized the interrelationship between education and international migration. The Commission requested the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to continue its research, and the United Nations Population Fund to continue its programming on the linkages between population factors and the attainment of the goals of Education for All.

23. The fourth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, in 2004, provided an interesting perspective on the linkages between education and sustainable management of forests. In many cases, tree products require less labour than industrial products, thus freeing children to attend school. It was also observed that incorporation of instruction on tree cultivation in primary education may provide an incentive for greater school enrolment, thus contributing to the realization of Millennium Development Goal 2. At its first session, in 2002, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues stressed the importance of respect for and protection of traditional indigenous knowledge and heritage. In 2004, at its third session, it addressed Goal 2 under the thematic approaches of language, cultural perspectives and traditional knowledge, underscoring the importance of Goal 2 for indigenous women and girls. To that end, Member States should consider the adoption and full implementation of comprehensive national indigenous education policies. The Commission on Crime Prevention emphasized the use of education and public awareness strategies to foster a culture of lawfulness and tolerance while respecting cultural identities.

Recommendation

24. **In the area of advancing education and literacy, the Council should encourage a further deepening of collaboration among its commissions, in particular the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Population and Development and the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Council may encourage the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, in preparing his report for the sixty-second session of the Commission on Human Rights, to take into account the work of the General Assembly, the Council and its commissions concerning this topic.**

C. Providing health services, preventing disease and reducing mortality

25. Another major policy focus in the work of the commissions related to health services, preventing disease and reducing mortality. Their work contributed to help to ensure that the HIV/AIDS pandemic would receive the urgent and continuous attention of the international community, which was called for at the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly, in June 2001, and the personal priority accorded to that challenge by the Secretary-General. A high-level meeting of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, held in June 2005, conducted an interim review of the goals set out in the Declaration of Commitment adopted by the Assembly in 2001 and provided input to the September Summit in that area.

26. The Commission on Population and Development reviewed issues of reproductive health and the demographic implications of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Those issues were discussed at its thirty-fifth session, in 2002, under the theme "Reproductive rights and reproductive health, with special reference to HIV/AIDS", and again at its thirty-eighth session, in 2005, under the theme "Population, development and HIV/AIDS, with particular emphasis on poverty". At the latter session, the Commission adopted a major resolution stressing the essential contribution of full implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, and emphasized the importance of integrating the goal of universal access to reproductive health into development strategies.

27. The Commission on Human Rights reaffirmed the right to enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and in 2002 appointed a Special Rapporteur whose mandate has been to focus on that right. It dealt with the protection of human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS, covering issues such as prevention, access to treatment and care, and the prohibition of HIV-related discrimination, as well as the debt problem of those developing countries particularly affected by HIV/AIDS. At its sixty-first session, in 2005, the Commission called upon all States to implement in full the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted at the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, in 2001, and requested the Secretary-General to invite Member States and the United Nations organs to integrate HIV-related human rights into their policies and programmes.

28. The Commission on the Status of Women addressed "Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS" as a priority theme of its forty-fifth session, in 2001. In its agreed conclusions, it recommended actions aimed at the empowerment of women, prevention, treatment, care and support and creating an enabling environment for regional and international cooperation. It also paid attention to the issue in its resolutions 47/1 and 48/2 and in its agreed conclusions of its forty-eighth session, in 2004, on the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality.

29. The connection between health and sustainable development was highlighted in the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. For example, in 2002, the Commission, acting as the preparatory committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, pointed to HIV/AIDS in Africa as one of the main areas of concern for the effective implementation of Agenda 21.

30. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs, at its forty-eighth session, in 2005, paid special attention to HIV/AIDS, with a thematic debate on drug abuse prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, at its thirteenth session, in 2004, expressed concern about the potential role of prisons as multipliers or "incubators" of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

31. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, at its first session, in 2002, noted the significance of incorporating indigenous understanding of the human body, the causes of health and illness and existing practices of treatment of women and men for the development of policies and guidelines on health care. The significance of trees to the achievement of health-related Millennium Development Goals was noted at the fourth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, which highlighted the role of certain tree species as an important source of medicinal

products in rural communities that have limited access to expansive modern processed drugs.

Recommendation

32. The Council should welcome the special attention given by the Commissions on Population and Development, the Status of Women and Human Rights to the issue of HIV/AIDS; invite them to deepen their collaboration in that area; and encourage other commissions to more effectively address the relevant aspects of the issue in their work programmes.

33. The Council could invite its commissions and their secretariats to clearly identify the operational implications of their work and bring them to the attention of the governing bodies of the United Nations funds and programmes for their consideration and guidance on their work on HIV/AIDS.

34. Overall, the Council could consider ways of promoting closer and more effective interaction between the work of the functional commissions and that of the governing bodies of funds and programmes and of ensuring that they draw, as appropriate, on relevant policy guidance from the commissions.

D. Promoting employment

35. In commitment 3, the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action on social development laid down the objective of promoting the goal of full employment as a basic priority of economic and social policies. For its part, the Millennium Declaration called for strategies that give young people a real chance to find decent and productive work.

36. The Commission for Social Development, at its forty-first session, in 2003, under its priority theme, "National and international cooperation for social development", considered the impact of employment strategies on social development. It called upon development partners to give adequate attention to productive and sustainable employment in their development policies. The commitment to the promotion of full, freely chosen, decent and productive employment as a fundamental component of any development strategy was renewed at its forty-third session, in 2005, in the 10-year review of the Copenhagen commitments.

37. Other commissions addressed employment as part of their main themes. For instance, the United Nations Forum on Forests noted that sustainable forest management programmes could benefit local workers through direct employment opportunities with decent and safe working conditions. At its third session, in 2004, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues recommended that Governments include in their employment policies actions that directly benefit indigenous women.

Recommendation

38. The Council may wish to devote one of its coordination sessions on the issue of employment and the realization of development goals. That would also examine the ways functional commissions are integrating that aspect in their work.

E. Achieving social integration and addressing vulnerabilities of social groups

39. Social integration and vulnerabilities of social groups were addressed by most commissions, albeit often at the margin and within their sectoral perspectives. The Commission on Social Development, as the entity primarily responsible for the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit on Social Development as well as the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, extensively addressed the issues of social integration and vulnerabilities with particular reference to youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and the family. In a declaration adopted at the forty-third session of the Commission for Social Development, in 2005, Governments urged that social integration be injected into the Millennium Development Goals to broaden the concept of poverty eradication.

40. The Commission on Population and Development, the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Commission on Human Rights, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice also paid attention to issues relating to youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, the family, and indigenous people as part of the deliberations on their main themes. For example, recognizing that children who are victims and witnesses of crime are particularly vulnerable and need special protection, assistance and support, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, at its fourteenth session, in 2005, adopted the "Guidelines on justice in matters involving child victims and witnesses of crime" as a framework to enhance the protection of child victims and witnesses.

Recommendation

41. **The Council should stimulate substantive exchanges among its functional commissions to promote the social integration component of social development and help "mainstream the concept of social integration". In the same context, the Council could urge its commissions in their work to take into account the needs and concerns of the vulnerable groups.**

F. Ensuring environmental sustainability and managing the natural resource base for development

42. With a view to protecting the common environment, the Millennium Declaration resolved to adopt a new ethic of conservation and stewardship. Millennium Development Goal 7 ("Ensuring environmental sustainability") includes as targets the integration of the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes, reversal of the loss of environmental resources, reduction by halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water, and achieving significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers, by 2020. These were reaffirmed in the outcomes of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation.

43. While the Commission on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Forum on Forests paid attention to environmental sustainability and natural resource

base management systematically and as an integral part of their mandates,[2] several commissions specifically chose themes to make contributions to Goal 7. At its thirty-fourth session in 2001, the Commission on Population and Development addressed "Population, environment and development". The Commission on the Status of Women addressed "Environmental management and mitigation of natural disasters: a gender perspective" as a priority theme at its forty-sixth session in 2002. It is the first negotiated outcome at the intergovernmental level that comprehensively addresses from a gender perspective environmental management and natural disasters. The Commission on Human Rights adopted annually a resolution on human rights and the environment as part of sustainable development. In resolution 2005/60, the Commission paid attention to activities relating to human rights and the environment in the context of poverty eradication and post-conflict situations. The Commission for Social Development in its 10-year review of the Social Summit, in 2005, addressed the integration of social and economic policy, thus contributing relevant analyses and recommendations on key dimensions of the sustainable development problematique.

44. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its forty-eighth session, in 2005, called for a comprehensive approach, integrating alternative development programmes, including preventive alternative development, into wider economic and social development programmes including: (a) environmental conservation and the recuperation of degraded ecosystems; (b) access to financial mechanisms and microcredits; (c) access to land ownership; and (d) capacity-building of local communities, institutions and authorities.

45. While the functional commissions addressed diverse elements directly relevant to policy development in furthering the achievement of the overall goal of environmental sustainability, the environmental dimension could be more effectively integrated into the work of relevant commissions. Building on the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, **the Council could urge its commissions to mainstream the concept of sustainable development in their work and encourage Governments and the United Nations system to fully integrate environment and natural resource management in broader national priorities and development planning processes, including poverty reduction strategies. It could also encourage the exchange of views by the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Forum on Forests on the issue of integrating social and environmental objectives.**

G. Promoting democracy, good governance and human rights

46. Public participation, accountability and transparency, supported by effective institutions are crucial elements of good governance. All functional commissions, notably the Commission on Human Rights, stressed the importance of democracy, human rights, law enforcement and good governance as central in the process of development. Close links were maintained between several commissions. In particular, the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women collaborated extensively with the aim of mainstreaming women's human rights. Similarly, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues met with the Special Rapporteurs of the Commission on Human Rights on the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples and on violence against women, its

causes and consequences and with the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women. Those forms of collaboration continued to promote a valuable synergy between functional commissions in that area.

47. Organized crime, corruption and terrorism were identified by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, at its thirteenth session, in 2004, as threats to security and development. The fight against corruption was seen as a prerequisite to establishing the rule of law and good governance and to creating the necessary thrust of the people in their institutions and representatives. During the senior-level discussion on progress made with regard to the criminal justice aspects of terrorism and international cooperation, terrorism was defined as one of the most serious threats to freedom, democracy and human rights and a major source of destabilization for States, which could only be defeated with the active participation of all States and regional organizations. The Commission emphasized the importance of international cooperation in the fight against terrorism and other forms of criminal behaviour.

H. Addressing challenges of countries with special needs

48. United Nations conferences from Rio to Johannesburg and Monterrey, and, more specifically, Barbados and Brussels, have sought to bring special focus on Africa, the least developed, landlocked developing and small island developing countries. Further, the Millennium Declaration addressed the special needs of those countries, and democracy in Africa. Most commissions extended support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and addressed the challenges of all countries with special needs during the five-year span providing policy inputs for the Council and, recently, to the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States held in Mauritius in January 2005. For instance, the Commission on Human Rights sought to bring special attention to the unequal distribution of the benefits of globalization and the increasing marginalization of the least developed and African countries.

I. Making macroeconomic policies work for sustained employment generating economic growth

49. Commitment 1 of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action called for the creation of an economic, political, social, cultural and legal environment to promote social development.

50. Similarly, at its twenty-fourth special session, the General Assembly recognized the importance of a favourable economic environment for social development putting forward precise recommendations on the generation of additional resources, efficient and equitable tax regimes and a stable international financial system.

51. Although the Commission for Social Development never took the first commitment of the Copenhagen Summit as its priority theme, it did insist from the beginning of its follow-up process to the Summit on the crucial role of appropriate economic policies. A significant outcome was achieved in 2002 with the adoption of

agreed conclusions on the question of integration of economic and social policies. Similarly, in 2003 and 2004, under consideration of its priority themes, the Commission adopted important resolutions on cooperation for the implementation of the social objectives of NEPAD. It invited the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to continue to include consideration of the integration of economic and social policies as one of the thematic areas to be addressed in future debates.

52. The Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development of 2002 emphasized the need to promote the integration of the three components of sustainable development — economic development, social development and environmental protection — as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars. At its ninth session, the Commission on Sustainable Development stressed the need to create an enabling domestic environment for sustainable development through the implementation of appropriate macroeconomic, social and environmental policies. In a similar vein, the United Nations Forum on Forests urged that national forest programmes be more closely linked to macroeconomic planning and assistance strategies in developing countries, and that enabling conditions for environmentally and socially responsible investments in the forest sector be created. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, at its third session, urged Governments to consider implementing special policies directed to employment creation for indigenous peoples, facilitating access to credit and the creation of small and medium-sized businesses.

53. During the reporting period, the Commission on Human Rights stressed the need for macroeconomic and financial policy issues to be integrated, on an equal footing and in a consistent way, with the realization of the broader social development goals, taking into account the specific characteristics, conditions and needs of debtor countries.

Recommendation

54. **The Council should emphasize the need for all Governments to place social development goals at the heart of their macroeconomic policies. In that context, the Council could also urge Governments to enhance coordination among ministries of foreign affairs, finance, development cooperation and trade in formulating economic, social and environmental policies to help to ensure greater policy coherence.**

J. Strengthening global partnership for development

55. All commissions recognized that the pursuit of development and poverty eradication required joint action. In that context, Goal 8 encompasses various elements of the global partnership for development agreed in the Monterrey Consensus and provides the necessary tools to review policies in areas of finance, governance, trade, external debt and technology.

56. Commitment 1 of the Copenhagen Summit includes the promotion of "dynamic, open, free markets". At its twenty-fourth special session, the General Assembly highlighted the importance of a favourable economic environment and additional resources for social development and requested the Commission for Social Development to take up the primary responsibility for the follow-up to and

review of its twenty-fourth special session and the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development. Although the Commission for Social Development never did take Commitment 1 of the Summit as its priority theme, it has repeatedly highlighted the crucial role of appropriate economic policies. A significant outcome was achieved in 2002 when the Commission adopted comprehensive agreed conclusions on the integration of economic and social policies. At its forty-first session, in 2003, the Commission for Social Development considered "National and international cooperation for social development" as one of its priority themes, recognizing that achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, demanded a new partnership between developed and developing countries. In 2005, the Commission again paid attention to financing for social development as part of its 10-year review of the World Summit for Social Development.

57. The Commission on Sustainable Development discussed the need for financial resources, including official development assistance (ODA) and debt relief, stressing the priority need to fulfil the financial commitments of Agenda 21. At its eleventh session, in 2003, the Commission underlined that partnerships in the context of the World Summit on Sustainable Development process and its follow-up should be developed and implemented. The crucial importance of increased market access to mobilize resources was also noted. At its twelfth session, in 2004, a broad-based appeal was made for development partners to move towards meeting all the Monterrey commitments and to target an increased amount of funding specifically for investments in water, sanitation and human settlements. It was emphasized that the partnership approach taken at Johannesburg and beyond could be a valuable and important modality to leverage additional resources for sustainable development.

58. The Commission on Human Rights emphasized annually the need to promote partnership approaches to international development cooperation and to ensure that prescriptive approaches to good governance did not impede such cooperation. The Commission also emphasized the need for new financial flows to debtor developing countries from all sources, in addition to debt relief measures that include debt cancellation, and urged creditor countries and international financial institutions to increase concessional financial assistance on favourable terms.

59. The United Nations Forum on Forests discussed the importance of finance and external donor assistance in a number of contexts and urged countries to strengthen international cooperation, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, on finance, trade, transfer of environmentally sound technology and capacity-building. Similarly, the Commission on Population and Development, at its thirty-eighth session, in 2005, called for increased commitment of financial resources to accelerate the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and to achieve the goals set for 2015. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, during the reporting period, repeatedly addressed the importance of improving international cooperation relating to combating and preventing crime. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, at its thirteenth session, in 2004, called for an open dialogue with development organizations, financial institutions and other relevant bodies to discuss how to increase the level of financial assistance with regard to rule of law issues.

60. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its forty-sixth session, dealt with the eradication of poverty, including through the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle in a globalizing world. In its agreed conclusions, the Commission addressed the issue of partnership for development with a view to empower women, eradicate poverty and mainstream the gender perspective in the ODA process. In its agreed conclusions, the Commission urged providing additional international financing and assistance to developing countries, enhancing market access for developing countries, eliminating restrictions on technology transfer, and addressing their external debt and debt-servicing problems.

61. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs highlighted in its work the need for strong international and development cooperation against the world drug problem.

Recommendation

62. **Mobilization of additional financial resources is required for funding the effective implementation of all the programmes arising from the outcomes of major conferences and summits. The Council should urge Member States to deliver on existing commitments, including the commitments made at the Monterrey Conference, as well as to promote an enabling environment for the involvement of and investment by the private sector and local communities.**

K. Promoting science and technology for development

63. Since the Millennium Summit, the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session, in March 2003, and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, throughout the five-year span, addressed the issue of science and technology for development as their main theme. The issue was also considered by other commissions and is reflected in some of their outcome documents.

64. The Commission on Science and Technology, in 2004, concluded that many developing countries were not likely to meet the Millennium Development Goals without concerted efforts to place science and technology at the centre of national development agendas. To scale up efforts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the Commission identified specific actions needed to integrate science and technology in national development strategies. Recognizing the importance of networks in that context, the Commission at its eighth session launched a new network of centres of excellence in developing countries. The aim of the network is to pool existing resources and facilities to carry out joint research in areas of critical importance to developing countries, and reverse the negative impact of brain drain by generating a critical mass of researchers who can effectively address development challenges. Those recommendations in several regards built on policy conclusions that emanated from the work of the Council on information and communication technology in 2000/2001 which not only led to the creation of an organizational Information and Communication Technology Task Force, but also gave momentum to information and communication technologies for development around the globe, leading to path-breaking initiatives such as the World Summit on the Information Society.

65. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its forty-seventh session, in 2003, examined, for the first time, the role and impact of information and communication

technology on the empowerment of women as one of its main themes, with a view to providing an input to the preparatory process of the Geneva phase of the World Summit on the Information Society. The Commission urged the integration of gender perspectives in every facet of the Summit and put forward a broad series of action recommendations that aim at ensuring that ICT becomes a tool for the promotion of gender equality, for instance, through online communities and networks.

66. The Commission on Sustainable Development, at its ninth session, in 2001, addressed the need for access to and transfer of technologies in the sectoral areas dealt with at its session (i.e., atmosphere, transport, energy), and pointed to the role of technological cooperation in that regard. In the same context, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in 2002, called for improved networks between and among universities, research institutions, government agencies and the private sector. At the twelfth session, in 2004, it was stressed that appropriate low-cost technologies were important for meeting the Millennium Development Goals and that advances in science and technology, together with technology transfer, were critical for achieving the long-term goals of sustainable development.

67. The Commission on Human Rights consistently underlined the importance of easier access for developing countries to the technology of the developed countries. It repeatedly called upon States to ensure the availability in sufficient quantities of pharmaceuticals and medical technologies, to use ICT to support education at an affordable cost, and to facilitate equal participation in, access to, and use of ICT.

68. The United Nations Forum on Forests emphasized the need to devise approaches to facilitate transfer of environmentally sound technology, traditional forest-related knowledge and research to developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition in order to support the effective implementation of sustainable forest management. At its third session, the Forum agreed on the establishment of an ad hoc expert group on finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to review existing initiatives and recommend new approaches.

69. The Commission on Crime Prevention highlighted the need to provide to developing countries the appropriate technical cooperation and financial support in order to enhance their ability to protect themselves from high-technology and computer-related crime.

70. The Commission on Population and Development, the Statistical Commission, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues have addressed the issue of science and technology for development mainly from the perspective of using ICT for improved data collection, exchange and processing.

Recommendations

71. **The Council should continue to encourage its commissions to support the fulfilment of the goals of the Declaration of Principles[3] and Plan of Action,[4] adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society, Geneva phase, in December 2003, contribute to the preparation of the second phase of the Summit, to be held in Tunis in November 2005, and urge the Summit at the Tunis phase to continue to integrate information and communication technologies for development (ICT4D) and a gender perspective in all aspects of its work.**

72. **Recognizing the contribution of the United Nations ICT Task Force in that area and the need to further build on such approaches, the Council may encourage multi-stakeholder approaches, including the establishment of a global multi-stakeholder network for ICT and development.**

73. **The Council should encourage Governments and the United Nations system, notably its commissions, to ensure that science and technology is incorporated in poverty reduction policies and strategies, and urge them to consider ways to strengthen linkages between public research and private industry, and tap into regional and international research and development networks.**

74. **The Council may request the functional commissions to encourage the launching of multi-stakeholder initiatives on promoting technology transfer and development in the areas of interest to developing countries.**

L. Advancing gender equality and empowering women

75. Since the Millennium Summit, the Commission on the Status of Women has addressed various aspects of gender equality and the empowerment of women through its consideration of priority themes.[2]

76. Gender equality and empowerment of women have also been addressed by several other functional commissions, including the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission on Social Development, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. For example, the Commission on Human Rights devoted considerable attention to human rights of women and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues adopted a comprehensive body of recommendations on indigenous women during its third session, in 2004. Several commissions, especially the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, adopted resolutions on violence against women. Moreover, the United Nations human rights mechanisms, including the Commission on Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women,[5] have given increased attention to violence against women with growing regularity. Other special procedures have contributed to increased awareness of harmful traditional practices and other forms of violence against women.

77. As part of its 10-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in 2005, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted a declaration emphasizing that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and stressed the need to ensure the integration of a gender perspective in the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the review of the Millennium Declaration. The Declaration will be transmitted, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session, including to the High-level Plenary Meeting. The Commission also transmitted a note prepared by the Secretariat on the linkages between gender equality and the United Nations development agenda.

78. The Council's agreed conclusions 1997/2 and its resolution 2004/4 have been instrumental in enhancing the promotion of gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system. The Council, in its resolution 2004/4, encouraged the governing bodies of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to ensure that gender perspectives are integrated into their programmes, including those relating to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits. It recommended that the General Assembly integrate gender perspectives in its High-level Plenary Meeting in September in 2005. The Commission on the Status of Women has played a major catalytic role in that area and has adopted on an annual basis resolutions that have encouraged further mainstreaming of gender perspectives into policies and programmes. **Gender mainstreaming may be further addressed by the Council when it undertakes a review and appraisal of the implementation of its agreed conclusions 1997/2 at its future sessions before 2010, as decided in its agreed conclusions of the coordination segment in 2004.**

Recommendation

79. **The Council should encourage its subsidiary bodies to incorporate gender equality issues in their integrated and coordinated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits; encourage its commissions to pay due attention to gender perspectives when examining their methods of work and developing the themes for their multi-year programme of work; and encourage the Commission on the Status of Women to continue its catalytic role and to contribute systematically to the work of other functional commissions by providing practical guidance on gender mainstreaming.**

M. Enhancing the role of civil society and private sector for development

80. All the functional commissions emphasized the role of the private sector, public-private partnerships, multi-stakeholder approach and public participation for development as outlined in the Millennium Declaration's resolve for strong partnerships with the private sector and civil society.

81. While the Commission on Sustainable Development recommended public-private partnerships and greater private sector involvement in the sectoral areas covered during its sessions, it also noted at its twelfth session, in 2004, that private sector promotion should be based on corporate social responsibility. That issue was also taken up by the Commission for Social Development, in 2003, when it considered as its main theme "Social responsibility of the private sector", emphasizing the need to take concrete actions within the United Nations system and through the participation of all relevant stakeholders on corporate responsibility and accountability. In a similar vein, at its fifty-eighth session, the Commission on Human Rights underlined that market forces alone could not guarantee the preservation and promotion of cultural diversity, which was seen as key to sustainable human development, and from that perspective, recognized that the pre-eminence of public policy, in partnership with the private sector and civil society, must be reaffirmed.

82. The transformative potential of civil society to assist in the realization of sectoral goals and to promote the development agenda was clearly reflected in the work of the commissions. For instance, the Commission on Population and Development, at its thirty-seventh session, in 2004, emphasized the importance of building and sustaining partnerships among Governments and relevant civil society stakeholders so as to strengthen the capacity of developing countries and the key actions for the successful implementation of the Programme of Action. Similarly, the Commission on Human Rights consistently called upon States to promote the effective and wide participation of representatives of civil society in decision-making processes related to the promotion and protection of economic, social and cultural rights. The Commission on Crime Prevention underscored that efforts to promote the rule of law needed to include all stakeholders in order to create a sense of ownership, stressing that community involvement and cooperation represented important elements of the concept of crime prevention. In specific areas such as in relation to trafficking of human beings, the Commission noted that civil society had a key role to play in the prevention of the phenomenon and in assistance to victims. The United Nations Forum on Forests called for effective participation of all relevant stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, in decision-making, implementation and practice of sustainable forest management.

N. Basic indicators related to United Nations conferences

83. Since 1998, the Council and the Statistical Commission have been engaged in a discussion of basic indicators related to recent United Nations conferences and summits. This year, the Statistical Commission took note of the work carried out by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goal Indicators, notably in compiling indicators for global monitoring. It also noted that many countries still lack the capacity to produce the necessary data and that a review of indicators currently being produced at the national level was necessary for all Millennium Development Goals. The Commission requested that a report be prepared regularly, beginning at its thirty-seventh session, on the ability of countries to produce individual indicators and on how metadata should be presented to accompany indicators on all Millennium Development Goals. It agreed to form a Group of Friends of the Chair to define the modalities of the report and develop suggestions on processes that can be used to bridge the information gap between users and producers of Goal indicators and the lack of adequate data sources.

84. In addition to the Statistical Commission, a number of other commissions pursued the consideration of indicators in their respective fields. For instance, the United Nations Forum on Forests highlighted the usefulness of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management frameworks for the development of national forest policy and planning efforts. At its fourth session, in 2004, the Forum acknowledged seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management, which were drawn from existing criteria and indicators processes and served as a reference framework for sustainable forest management. The Commission on Sustainable Development recommended further work on indicators for sustainable development by countries at the national level, including integration of gender aspects, in line with national conditions and priorities. The Commission on Science and Technology for Development, in collaboration with UNCTAD, developed ICT Development Indices, which measures ICT development, including indicators for connectivity,

access, usage and policy. **To achieve further harmonization of conference indicators, the concerned stakeholders, such as organizations in the United Nations system, and other functional commissions, should support the Statistical Commission in its designated role as the intergovernmental focal point for the review of conference indicators.**

Notes

[1] General Assembly resolutions 50/227 and 52/12 B; Economic and Social Council resolutions 1998/46, 1998/47, 1998/49, 1999/1, 1999/51 and 2001/27.

[2] See E/2005/CRP.3.

[3] See A/C.2/59/3, annex, chap. I, sect. A.

[4] Ibid., sect. B.

[5] See Commission on Human Rights resolutions 1994/45 and 2003/45.